

T W O
D I S C O U R S E S
O N T H E
L O V E *of* G O D,
I N T H E
S U F F E R I N G S o f o u r S A V I O U R
J E S U S C H R I S T.

A N D O N T H E
G O O D N E S S o f G O D
Discern'd in his Works, to Mankind.

Extracted from the Homilies on those Subjects; put into a new Method and modern Style, and fitted to common Use; very necessary for all Christian Families, especially at this Time.

By E. K I M P T O N, L. B.
CURATE of St. Matthew, *Middlesex.*

L O N D O N: φ

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P R E F A C E.

To the Reader.

AS the Language of the Homilies is generally uncouth, and many of the Words obsolete and out of Use, I cannot do a more acceptable Piece of Service, (I flatter myself, and may God give his Blessing to it) to the Christian Community, than to render these Subjects which I have chosen, of general Utility, and to excite others much abler than myself, to follow my Example. For we want a new Edition and Emendation of the Homilies, as well as a new Translation of the Holy Bible, which would prevent many Disputes and Animosities in the Christian Scheme, and would reconcile systematic Divines to think and preach more candidly, I am, your unworthy Servant in CHRIST,

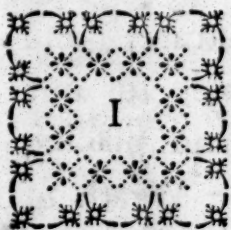
The EDITOR.



A
D I S C O U R S E
O N T H E
L O V E of G O D,

I. Ep: St. PETER. Chap: II. Ver: 21.

CHRIST hath suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that we should follow his Steps.



It would ill become us as Christians, who are redeemed from the Bondage of Sin and Death, by our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, to let this Time pass, without a commemoration of the Work of our Redemption, or the Mercy and Love of CHRIST, to us misera-

ble Sinners. If Benefits to a State done by Man, are remembered, with Thanks and Honour; how much more ought we to remember, the Benefits bestowed on us and all Mankind, by the Death and Passion of CHRIST; whereby, he hath obtained for us Pardon and Remission of our Sins, and reconciled us to his heavenly Father, so as to make us the adopted Sons of GOD, and Heirs with him to the Kingdom of Heaven.

So great was the LOVE of CHRIST, that tho' we were Enemies to him, by our Disobedience to his Fathers Commands, he nevertheless divested himself of his celestial Glory, subjected himself to human Nature, and that in the most abject State, for our Benefit and Advantage; and placing himself between us and the Wrath of an offended GOD paid our Ransom for us, discharged our Debt of Sin, and appeased his Father's Wrath.

Who

Who then is there that can think on so great a Debt, which could not be discharged but by the Death of the eternal Son of God, and not hate it ? If so hateful was Sin in the Sight of God, as not to be attoned for, neither by Man nor Angel, but only by the Sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb of God; who is there so abandoned, but must hate Iniquity in his Heart ?

If we rightly consider that the Son of God was slain for our Sins, we shall find more Reason to lament for them, than to exclaim against the Malice and Cruelty of the Jews, who were only his Executioners : It was for our Sins he was wounded : It is therefore highly fitting that we should lament for them ; for if the Son of God was thus punished not for his own, but for our Sins ; how much more may we expect to be punished, for the many and daily Vices which

we commit against GOD, unless we truly and sincerely repent of them?

No Man who follows after Sin, can be in favour with GOD; no Man can say that he loveth CHRIST, and cherish it in his Heart; for only so much do we love, and so far come unto GOD and CHRIST, as we hate and depart from all Iniquity.

It was not only they who nailed CHRIST to the Cross that are his Tormentors and Crucifiers, but all they who by their Sins, for which he died do as far as in them lies, crucify afresh the Son of GOD: Let us then take heed and beware how we commit Sin, lest we be found to be Enemies to GOD and Traitors to CHRIST; and if the Wages thereof be Death, surely he is in no little Danger who
com-

commits it; for *St. Paul* saith, “ If
 “ ye live after the Flesh (to fulfil the
 “ Lusts thereof) ye shall die.”

We cannot live unto GOD, but
 by dying unto Sin; if then CHRIST
 be in us, we are dead unto it;
 and if the Spirit of GOD which raised
 up CHRIST from the Dead, be in
 us, then shall the same Spirit raise
 us up to Life everlasting: But if Sin
 reign in us, then is GOD the Foun-
 tain of Grace, departed from us,
 then hath the Devil dominion over
 us, and if in that miserable State
 we die, we cannot expect to rise to
 Life, but must fall into Destruction;
 for CHRIST hath not redeemed us
 from Sin that we should return to
 it again, but that we should live
 unto Righteousness.

For this we are washed with the
 Water of Regeneration in our Bap-
 tism,

tism, from the Pollution of Sin, that we should live in pureness of Life; in our Baptism we promised to renounce the Devil and all his Works, and become obedient Children to God; and on these Terms received the Covenant of Adoption to become the Sons of God. If he then is our Father, let us give him due Honour; if we are his Children, let us be obedient unto him, like unto CHRIST who was obedient to his Father unto Death, even the Death of the Cross, for all that believe in him. For CHRIST suffered not for his own Sin, for he was free from the same, but for us. For saith *Isaiah*, he was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities, and with his Stripes we are healed, for he bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree; he bore our Grievs and carried our Sorrows,
and

and the Lord laid on him the Iniquity of us all. he suffered the Penalty to deliver us from Danger, that we being dead with him unto Sin, should live unto Righteousness.

He willingly suffered Pain in his own Body, that he might deliver us from Pain eternal; the more then we are beholden to God for his Benefits, the more grateful ought we to be; and may have the greater Hope, that as he has given us his only Son to die for our Sins, so he will also give us all other Things for our Benefit and Advantage.

We may then in all our Wants both of Body and Soul, boldly present our Petitions to the Throne of God, and ask in Faith without doubting, and we need not fear but we shall obtain our Desires. For as it is given unto us, thro' Faith in CHRIST, to become the Children of God, so,

whatsoever we shall ask our heavenly Father in his Name, we shall receive who for his Sake our God will deny us nothing.

So pleasant was the Sacrifice of his Son's Death, which he freely offered in the Sight of his heavenly Father; that it made amends and became an Attonement for the Sins of the whole World. Such Favour has CHRIST by his Death, obtained for all who truly believe in him; that thro' the Merits thereof, they are re-instated in the Grace of God, and freed from the Debt and Burthen of their Sins.

Who can express the most excellent Worth of that Sacrifice, whereby we receive continual Pardon for our daily Sins, whereby we obtain our Justification, and by which is purchased eternal Happiness to our Souls. For there is nothing under Heaven

ven, whereby we can be saved, but only by the most precious Sacrifice of the Body of CHRIST upon the Altar of the Cross.

Surely no Works which can be done by Man, can be compared in Merit with this benevolent Act of CHRIST; for all our Thoughts and Actions are of no Value, unless they are joined to the Merits of CHRIST's Death. All our Righteousness is Imperfection, when compared with his Righteousness; for in that there was no Spot of Sin, nor any Imperfection; and therefore is it able to make full amends for the Insufficiency of our Righteousness, which is mixed with the Alloy of Sin and full of Imperfection; therefore unable to obtain the Favour of God, much less to challenge the Reward due to the Merits of CHRIST only.

Let us then glorify his Name and praise him for ever, who by his great

Mercy hath purchased eternal Redemption for us. Who unmoved by the heavy Sufferings of his bloody Passion, opened his very Heart and gave his own Body wholly for our Ransom.

Let us then open our Hearts to him, and by our godly Lives, shew our Gratitude to such a Lord, and in Remembrance of so great a Benefit, let us take up our Cross and follow him; his Passion being not only a Ransom for our Sins, but also an Example of Patience in suffering for us.

If it was necessary for CHRIST thus to suffer, before he entered into his Glory; why should we think it hard, to bear the Crosses of Adversity and the Troubles of this World; seeing that if we suffer with CHRIST, we shall also reign with him in Heaven.

Not that the Sufferings of this World are worthy to be compared with

with the Glory which shall be revealed in us; yet we should be content cheerfully to suffer, that we may be like unto CHRIST in this Life, and by our Deeds glorify our Father who is in Heaven. For tho' it may to us seem painfull to bear the Cross of CHRIST in suffering in this Life, yet it bringeth forth the Fruit of Joy unto them that are exercised thereby.

Let us then not regard the Pain, but look unto the Reward which follows the Labour: let us endeavour to bear those Sufferings, which we may endure innocently for CHRIST's Sake, with Patience, as he himself did. For saith the Apostle, If ye suffer for your Faults with Patience, what Glory is it, then hath not Patience its true Work in you; but if ye suffer undeservedly, and take it patiently, this is acceptable to God; for so did CHRIST suffer, who did no Sin,

Sin, neither was guile found in his Mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threat'ned not, but committed his Cause to God, that judgeth righteously.

Perfect Patience careth not what nor from whom it suffereth, but endeavours to suffer undeservedly; and so little subject is that Man who hath true Christian Charity in his Heart to Vengeance, that according to our Lords Command, he is always ready to do Good for Evil, to bless them that curse him, and to pray for them that despitefully use him and persecute him; according to the Example of CHRIST, the most perfect Pattern of Meekness and Charity, who in his expiring Moments when bleeding on the Cross, for our Sins, prayed for his Persecutors and Murderers; whose steeled Hearts, and uncompassionate Breasts, only derided and laughed at his Sufferings. Yet so compassionate
was

was he towards them, that he offered up his Prayers to his heavenly Father, saying forgive them, for they know not what they do.

When his own treacherous Servant and apostate Apostle, came to betray him to his Enemies, he only said to him, " Wherefore art thou come."

If then we would rightly commemorate CHRIST'S Sufferings for us, we must be mindful of, and imitate these great Examples of his Charity. If we would become true Servants of CHRIST, we must have such Love one towards another. For thus saith our Lord and Saviour, If ye love them only, who love you, what Reward have ye, or what do ye more than others, do not even the Heathens and the greatest Sinners the Same?

True Christian Charity must rise higher in Perfection, and imitate the Perfection of our Father who is in
Heaven,

Heaven, who maketh his Sun to shine on the Just and on the Unjust, and sendeth his Rain on the Good and on the Evil. We should shew our Love and Charity indifferently to all, Friend or Foe; and like obedient Children, follow the Example of God our heavenly Father.

For as CHRIST who was the Son of God, and equal with his Father, was nevertheless obedient to him even to the most shameful Death of the Cross.— Ought we not then to be obedient to our God, in the smaller Matters of Love, Charity and Patience; let us then live as sincere Christians, being kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for CHRIST'S Sake hath forgiven us.

Those Men are very unfit to ask Forgiveness of their Sins from God, who refuse to forgive the smaller Offences of their Brethren against them. In vain do they seek for Mercy from
God,

God, who refuse to shew Mercy; if we desire that God should forgive us our Trespases, we must also forgive all those who trespass against us. This is the Condition which God requires of us. Forgive and ye shall be forgiven. It is very unbecoming in Christians to be severe and rigid one towards another, when CHRIST our Saviour hath been so kind to us, as to lay down his Life for us, that our Sins might be forgiven; for how unworthy soever our Neighbour of himself may be of our Forgiveness; yet surely CHRIST is worthy of it, for whose Sake we ought to forgive all who offend us.

If we expect any Benefit from that Pardon, which CHRIST by his precious Blood shedding, hath purchased from God for us, it is necessary that we forgive our Brethren. Nothing is more becoming the Servants of CHRIST than Mercy and Compassion. Let us not then be rigid and severe, but

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kind and favourable one towards another; let us according to St. James's Advice. Pray for one another, that we may become less liable to Offences, one towards another, which thro' the Frailness of our Nature we are all of us too prone to; and that we may be of one Mind and one Spirit, agreeing in brotherly Love, as the Children of God:

By these Means we shall obtain Mercy from God, and become the more ready to receive our most gracious Saviour and Redeemer, in his most blessed Sacrament, to the everlasting Comfort of our Souls: For CHRIST delighteth to enter in and to dwell with that Soul, where Love and Charity reigneth, and where Peace aboundeth.

GOD, saith St. John, is Love and he that abideth in Love, abideth in God, and God in him. And again by this we know that we are of God,

if we love our Brethren, and that we are delivered from Death unto Life. But he that hateth his Brother, abideth in Death and is the Child of the Devil. For as Peace and Charity make us the Children of GOD, and like unto CHRIST, so Hatred and Malice make us the Children of the Devil and like unto him.

May then Almighty GOD grant us his Grace, that we may follow the Example of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, in Peace and Charity, in Patience, Meekness and Suffering; that he may dwell in us, and give unto us the sure Pledge of our Salvation: for if the Mind of CHRIST be in us, then may we be assured through him of the Favour of GOD.

He sitteth on the right Hand of GOD as our Mediator and Intercessor, pleading our Cause before his heavenly Father, and praying that his assisting

Grace may be given unto us, to aid us in all our Necessities. Wherefore in all our Wants we may safely apply ourselves to GOD for CHRIST'S Sake, and need not fear but we shall obtain our Petitions.

Let us then examine ourselves, how much we stand in need of this great Virtue of Charity and Patience; and if we find our Hearts disinclined thereto, in forgiving those who may have offended us, then let us acknowledge our Want, and pray unto GOD that he would turn our Hearts, and grant us that most excellent Gift of Charity, the very Bond of Peace and of all Virtues: For unless we forgive others, we cannot expect ourselves to be forgiven of GOD. Unless we forgive our Neighbours, it is not all that we can do, not all the Prayers of ourselves or others for us, it is not our own nor others good Works in our behalf, that can pacify GOD, or prevail with him

him to be at Peace with us, nor can we expect the Mediation of CHRIST, for he that loveth CHRIST, must love his Brother also.

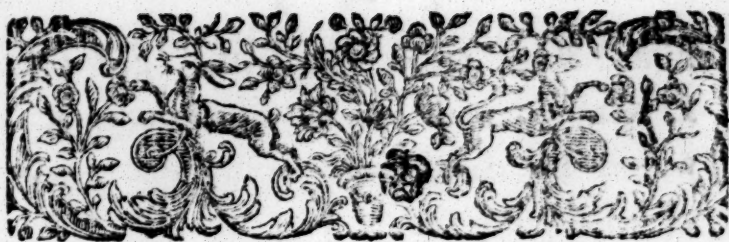
'Tis Mercy that is more acceptable to GOD than Sacrifice. 'Twas Mercy moved our Lord and Saviour to suffer for his Enemies, we ought then to follow his Example.

For tho' we meditate frequent on the Benefits of CHRIST's Passion, tho' we praise him for them and trust in them, yet if we follow not the example of his Passion, it will but little avail us. But if we consider the Death and Passion of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, thus dying for us, and hold fast by Faith the Merits thereof, resolving as we are Christians to live like Christians, in perfect Love and Charity with all Men, even as CHRIST, who laid down his Life for all Men; then do we truly remember his Death, and by
thus

thus following his Steps, we shall be
fure to follow him to Glory eternal,
where he now reigneth with the
FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, Three
Persons and One God,

To whom be all Honour and Glory
now and for evermore. Amen.



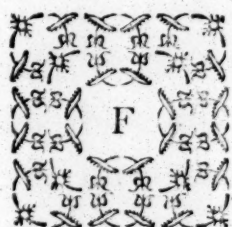


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D I S C O U R S E
O N T H E
G O O D N E S S of G O D

Discern'd in his Works to Mankind.

ROM. Chap. XI. Ver. 36.

*For of him, and through him, and to
him are all Things.*

ROM these Words may
be observed the Praise
and Commendation due
to the Almighty, not
only for our Creation
and Preservation, wherein his excellent
Power and Wisdom is so manifest, as
must induce us to honour and fear
him:

him. But, more especially, for his Liberality and bountiful Goodness, which he daily bestows on the Sons of Men; for whose Use he made the World and all Things that are therein. Which loving Kindness and Beneficence should, on our Part, be remembered with Praise, Love and Thanks of Gratitude; and should move us to obey God and serve him truly, all the Days of our Lives. Let me then hope, that what I may now say may raise such Emotion in your Hearts, as may induce you to praise God for his Goodness: For of what Benefit will it be to you to know these Things, that whatever is good cometh from God, and that whatsoever cometh from him must be good, if you rest satisfied with the bare Knowledge thereof, and do not glorify him in his great Power and Goodness. What Service can it be to Men, to consider the Creation of the World, and to behold the Goodness

ness of God therein; when they are not led by this Consideration, to praise him for them? If they do not, what can they expect but to perish in their Folly, to be led through their Unthankfulness into utter Destruction? For nothing else can be expected, from such as draw nigh unto God by Knowledge, and yet depart from him by Ingratitude and Unthankfulness. For, saith the Psalmist, Lo! they that depart from God shall perish, for he hath destroyed all them that have forsaken him. Which the Prophet Jeremiah confirmeth, saying, O Lord, whatsoever they be that forsake thee, shall be confounded; they that depart from thee, shall be written in the Dust and soon forgotten.

It can then be no Benefit to us, to hear of the Goodness of God, if we are not enflamed thereby, to praise him for that Goodness. It was

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of little Service to the Jews to know they were the elect People of God, since they received not him in their Hearts, nor were thankful for his Benefits bestowed upon them; and their Ingratitude was the Cause of their Destruction.

Let us then not follow their Steps, but rather be led by the Example of St. Paul, who, when he meditated on the wond'rous Works and the Goodness of Almighty God, in an Extacy exclaimed, O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments; and his Ways past finding out! For, of him, and thro' him, and to him are all Things. To whom be Glory for evermore.

From which Words, I shall endeavour to shew you, that all good Things come unto us from the Father of Lights.

Which

Which being duly considered, must cause us to return our most grateful Thanks and Praise to the All-bountiful and Almighty Donor. And that we may do these Things the better, to the Glory of God, let us, with Faith and Charity in our Hearts, call upon him, the Father of Mercies, from whom cometh every good and perfect Gift, thro' the Mediation of his dearly beloved Son our Saviour, that we may be assisted by his Holy Spirit, to enable us to demean ourselves, both in speaking and hearing to the Salvation of our Souls.

But let me not here be understood (my Christian Hearers) as tho' I meant fully to declare unto you, that excellent Power and incomparable Wisdom of the Almighty, which is past Man's Understanding : For how can that be comprehended by mortal Words, which is in itself incomprehensible ; and what Arrogance must

it be for Dust and Ashes to imagine that he can worthily describe his Maker. It is impossible for the dark Understanding and Wisdom of Man to speak sufficiently of that Majesty, which Angels cannot comprehend. Let me rather acknowledge my Weakness, than rashly attempt that which is above my Capacity to perform.

Let us rather, in low Humility of Heart, reverence and fear that Majesty which we cannot comprehend, acknowledging our own Weakness, than attempting to explain what surpasses our Understanding; which by an over curious Enquiry, may be over charged with Glory. We should rather contemplate the Goodness of God, in which we may be profitably employ'd, and may bolder examine. To consider the Power of the Godhead, can only make us dread and fear him. To consider his Wisdom, might discomfort our Frailty. But
when

when we consider his Goodness, we are thereby encouraged to trust in him. Thereby we are assured, we may take Refuge, Hope and Comfort in him our merciful Father, thro' the whole Course of our Lives: His Power and Wisdom shew him a God omnipotent and omniscient, ruling in Heaven and on Earth, and having all Things in Subjection under his Feet; so that none shall say unto him What dost thou? For no one can resist him. For he maketh all Things in his Judgment for his own Pleasure; even the Wicked for the Day of Evil. He is therefore in Scripture called a consuming Fire, a fearful and terrible God. In this Light then we cannot approach unto him, but his Goodness tempereth the Greatness of his Power, making us bold, and giving us Hope, that he will be merciful unto us.

It is his Goodness that moveth him
to

to have Delight in the Sons of Men: It is his Goodness that moveth him to call us unto him; it is that which endureth our departing from him, and waiteth long for our Repentance. It was his Goodness that gave us Reason. It was of his Mercy that we became Christians, and were brought into a nearer Relation to him, and the Hope of everlasting Life. What else doth urge him by his gentle and loving Voice in the Scriptures, to call us to Repentance, and thereby to come unto him; it is not our Deserts, but his Goodness only: For, it was he that made us and not we ourselves. It was CHRIST who redeemed us, and saved us, not for our Deserts; but by the Goodness of God only.

If any one should now ask, from whence came the Righteousness and good Deeds of those who have fallen asleep

asleep in the LORD, with which GOD was well pleased? Ifaiah will tell us, It is the LORD who of his Goodness hath wrought all our Works in us.

But to prove this more fully, and to give an Answer to all such as seem to justify themselves by their own Righteousness, and rob GOD of his Honour, by imputing to their own Merits what is due to his Goodness alone. Let us hear what St. Paul saith, who tells us, that we are not able of ourselves to think any Thing (that is good) as of ourselves, but our Sufficiency is of GOD; who enableth us both to will and to do; for it is in him we live, move, and have our Being.

Hence then, it is plain, that all the Good in us, and all the Grace in our Souls, is of the mere Goodness of GOD. And is it reasonable to think, that as all spiritual good Things proceed from him; that temporal

poral Goods do not do the same, but arise from some other Cause within ourselves? For, doth GOD of his Goodness adorn our Souls, with all the Powers and Faculties thereof, and are not the Gifts of the Body wherewith it is cloathed, also from him? If he doth the greater, doubtless he doth the less also.

To justify a Sinner, and to create a Man anew, from a Life of Sin, to a Life of Righteousness, is, as St. Augustine hath told us, a greater Act than to create a new Heaven and a new Earth: We must then acknowledge, that every good and every perfect Gift which is in us, whether it be of Grace, Nature or Fortune, is of GOD, and cometh down from the Father of Lights.

Nor is it to be thought, that GOD after having created this World, left it wholly in the Hand of Man, to be

be governed according to his capricious Will, taking no further Care about it, like the Mechanic, who having finished his Work, leaves it in the Hands either of his Employer or Purchaser, and has no farther Thought of it.

No! as God as first created this World, so he still preserveth the same, for without his divine Providence interposing, it could not long remain in its present State, to which the Prophet Nehemiah beareth Witness, saying, Thou even thou art Lord alone, thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Host, the Earth with all Things that are therein, the Seas and all that are therein, and thou preservest them all; and St. Paul tells us, he upholdeth all Things by the Word of his Power. If his especial Goodness were not omnipresent, all Things would soon fall into Disorder and

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final Ruin. But he is visible every where, in Heaven and on Earth, and filleth all Creatures with his Presence: The Fire with Heat, the Water with Moisture, the Earth with its vivifying Strength and Juices, to bring forth Fruit for the Use of Man. Even our very Nutriment, without his Aid would yield us no Nourishment. No Herb would give us Health, according to the wise Son of Sirach, It is neither Herb nor mollifying Plaister, that restoreth Man to Health, but thy Word, O LORD.————

It is not the Increase of the Fruits of the Earth that feedeth Man, but the Word of the LORD, which preserveth them that trust in him; for Moses and CHRIST himself hath told us, that Man liveth not by Bread only, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.

It is not therefore any Power in the Creatures that worketh their Effects,

fects, but the Power and Goodness of God working in them. It is his Word only by which all Things subsist. For by the same Word which the Heavens were made, by the same are they now upholden and preserved, saith St. Peter. And in the same State shall they remain, till God shall withdraw his Power from them and speak their Dissolution.

For were not the Power and Goodness of God ruling in the Creatures, how could the Sea, so great a Quantity of Fluids, raging to deluge the Earth, be preserved within Bounds, from overflowing all Things according to its Nature? which holy Job notices, saying, behold he holdeth the Waters, and by the Breath of the LORD the Waters are streightened. or who, saith the Almighty, shut up the Sea with Doors, and said hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud Waves be stayed?

How could the various Elements, so contrary to each other, continue in Harmony and Concord, for the Service of Man, if it were not for the Power and Goodness of God restraining their Force, from destroying each other; or why should not the Sun, that immense Body of Light and Fire, burn up all Things, were it not directed in its Course by the Almighty Power, to give Light and competent Heat to his Creatures, and to bring forth and ripen the Fruits of the Earth, for the Service of Man? Or how should this ponderous Mass of Earth, hang in the void Space, unless upheld by an invisible Almighty Power? For thus saith Job, He stretcheth out the North over the empty Place, and hangeth the Earth upon Nothing. He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds, and the Clouds are not rent under them. And the Royal Psalmist testifies, He laid the Foundations of
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the Earth so as it shall not be removed for ever.

If we take a View of the Beasts of the Field, or the Fishes of the Sea, many of which far surpass the Strength of Men, we must acknowledge it to be the Goodness of God, that they prevail not against us, but are under our Subjection, and subservient to our Use; what was it, but the Divine Providence, that taught Man to subdue the Strength of the Horse, whose Neck is clothed with Thunder, the Glory of whose Nostrils is terrible, who paweth in the Valley, and rejoiceth in his Strength, who mocketh at Fear, and is not affrighted; was it in Man's own Brain, of his own Invention, to subdue him, and make him useful to his Purpose? Or was it not rather the Goodness of God, which inspired him with Understanding to perform this?

Who

Who was it put Wisdom in the Heart of Man, but only God of his Goodness? For tho' every Man hath a Mind, yet it is God that giveth Understanding. It could not be Man's Wit alone, that invented the various Mechanic Arts, but the Goodness of God, which gave Men Understanding, and prompted them to examine into the Natures and Dispositions of all his Creatures, so as to render them serviceable, not to our Necessities alone, but also for our Pleasure and Delight.

So liberal is God's Goodness to us, to provoke our Gratitude to him, that the wise Man, the Son of Sirach, confesseth, that in God's Hand are we, and all our Words, all Wisdom also and Knowledge of Workmanship: For it is he that hath given Man the Knowledge of Things, both to know the Disposition of the World, the Operation of the Elements

ments, the Beginning and End of Times, the Change and Diversities of them ; the Course of the Year, and its Seasons ; the Order of the Stars, the Natures of Beasts, and the Powers of them ; the Violence of the Winds ; and the Reasonings of Men ; the Diversities of Plants, and the Virtues of their Roots ; and whatsoever is hid and secret in Nature, that the LORD hath taught.

And farther, who can search out the Things that be in Heaven ? for hardly do we guess right at Things that are on Earth, and with Labour do we find out the Things that are before us, for our Wisdom is imperfect, and our Policy uncertain ? No Man can find out these Things, except God give him Wisdom, and sendeth into his Heart his Spirit from above.

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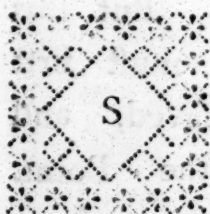
If then, the wise Man thus confesseth all Wisdom and Knowledge to proceed from the Goodness of God, shall not we acknowledge the same, and return our grateful Thanks to Him, for his Goodness and Kindness to his Creatures ?

Time would be wanting to shew fully, how great the Goodness of God appears in all the Creatures of the World, how wonderful they are in their Creation, how beautiful in their Order, and how necessary for our Use ; infomuch that all Men must acknowledge, their Author to be none other than Almighty God, whose Goodness in his mighty Works, they must extol, praise and magnify for evermore. For which excellent Goodness, let us, as it is our bounden Duty, render unto God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, all Praise and Thanksgiving, Honour and Glory, now and for evermore. Amen.



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ANIMADVERSION.



T. AUGUSTIN, who particularly acknowledges that he found an insuperable Difficulty in reconciling the Doctrine of Grace in GOD and Free Will in Man; notwithstanding which, he steadfastly believed both, saying, in his Epistle to *Valentinus*, Si non est DEI Gratia, quomodo salvat Mundum, & si non est Liberum Arbitrium, quomodo judicat Mundum? i.e. Where it not for the Grace of GOD, how would

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he save the World? And were there not a free Will in Man, how could he judge the World? And indeed, he always observ'd this as his constant Maxim, "Never to deny that in any Doctrine which is plain, because he could not comprehend something therein which was obscure."

The Doctrine of the *Antinomians* is this, that if Mankind live as they will, they shall be saved, since CHRIST has died for all. But this is a great Mistake, they must first prove that all will be saved, and then we will give up the Point. Now CHRIST came to save us from our Sins, the Design of his Appearance was, to redeem us from all Iniquity, and to purify to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works. And I am sure there is as much spoken of in favour of good Works in holy Scripture, as there is of Faith, and we must manifest
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the one by the other, else we are none of his Disciples, neither will he own us for his at the last, and receive us into Glory.

However we live upon Earth, it is the Righteous only that will enter into Life. But say they, we cannot do a good Work, so say I, by the mere Light of Nature, since without Faith it is impossible to please God, but then GOD is not an Egyptian Task Master, he does not command us to make Brick without Straw, why does he give us a Talent, and enjoins us to make use of it, if it was useless. He does not require us to seek his Face in vain.

Again, this Doctrine does not encourage Holiness, but is a Promotion of Vice, and therefore contrary to the holy Religion which the blessed JESUS came to inculcate amongst Mankind.

Pray why is this Life call'd a probationary State, but that when the Christian is tried, he may receive a Crown of Glory. Tho our Redemption is finished, yet our Salvation is not. Therefore let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.—So run that ye may obtain. For he and he only that endureth to the End of his Christian Race, shall be saved.—And therefore is this Life compar'd unto a Warfare, that we Christians may be made meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance with the Saints in Light. God grant that may be yours and my Lot, O Christian and fellow Sinner.

Without Repentance we must all perish; and without Holiness, no one shall see and enjoy God. If all had true Faith, and so in the Way of Salvation, St. *James* had no Occasion to upbraid those to whom he writes, that some of them wanted that
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necessary Disposition of all Godliness and true Religion: It being the Parent of all Virtues, without which we are counted Dead before God.

And therefore they are without Excuse, being disobedient to every good Word and Work.—But may the Lord open their Eyes, to see the Things which concern their everlasting Peace, before they are forever hid from their Eyes.

When we have unhappily suffered ourselves to be conquered by our Lusts, it is great Goodness in the Almighty, to regard it as an Act of Temerity and Weakness, and to receive us again into his divine Favour, on the easy Terms of Repentance and Amendment of Life, through Faith in the blessed Gospel of his Son.



S Religion is a Matter of the greatest Concern, and Seriousness ; whatever relates to it ought to be treated with the greatest Reverence and Sobriety ; and therefore all Railing, Reproach, Drollery, &c. ought to be banished from Discourses of either Side. The primitive Apologists for the Christian Religion, did not employ their Pens in trifling Mirth and Railery upon them ; neither did *Celsus* and other Pagan Writers, employ their Learning to confute the Christian Doctrines, in the Stile of Drollery and fatirical Wit. If Religion be true, as undoubtedly it is, the more it is enquired into, the more it will be found to be so ; and this will always administer both more Conviction and more Satisfaction to the sincerely Religious and diligent Searcher after Truth, than all the idle Jargon whatsoever

soever, where Prejudice and Prepossession bear the Sway; and a captious Humour of Wrangling, devoid of Wisdom and Goodness, which does not in the least promote the Cause of Virtue, but rather the Cause of Vice. Tho' I must own, that some Free Thinkers, (which is only another Term for free Livers) act with more Precaution than one would imagine they might, according to their own Principles; yet Religion is certainly a Help and a Completion of natural Religion, if they would do themselves and others the Justice to acknowledge from whence they are beholden, to a perfect System of religious Laws, which are best agreeable to the most High, and which natural Religion cannot help us to.

It is amazing that the Adversaries of the Christian Religion should say, that the old Testament does not predict our Lord and Saviour JESUS

CHRIST,

CHRIST, when the Jews, both anti-ent and modern, always confess it did; and does not our divine Master say, search the Scriptures, (the old Testament) for they are they which testify of me?

From our LORD's Parable of the Vine, we have this remarkable Observation suggested to us, that the natural Vine is merely passive in all its Productions, whereas the mystical one is not so; and therefore, tho' the Barrenness of the Branches of the former be a Misfortune only, yet of the latter and spiritual one, is truly a Crime: Hence we are called upon to cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness, both of Flesh and Spirit; exhorted not to receive the Grace of God in vain; forbidden to resist to quench, to grieve, his Holy Spirit; commanded to work out our own Salvation, with Fear and Trembling; upon this Encouragement, that such Labour

Labour shall not be in vain; because it is God which worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure. When God had set *David's* Heart at Liberty, he then resolved and ran the Way of his Commandments: When CHRIST had strengthened *St. Paul*, he could then do all Things.

The chief Thing then requisite, in a true Repentance and hearty Belief in CHRIST, is a patient Continuance in well doing to the End of our Lives. For as the holy JESUS assures us, that he that holds out to the End shall be saved: So does the Spirit of God profess, that if any Man draw back, i e fall into Perdition, his Soul shall have no Pleasure in him. Hence we are said to be Partakers of CHRIST, if we hold the Beginning of our Confidence steadfast unto the End. But not else. For 'tis to him only that overcometh,

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and keepeth his Works to the End,
 that our SAVIOUR hath promised a
 Reward to. Hence our Religion is
 said to be a continual Warfare, and
 we must be pressing forward toward
 the Mark of our high Calling, with
 the Apostle, least we fail of the Prize.
 If the Righteous themselves shall
 scarcely be saved, where then shall
 the Wicked and the Ungodly appear.

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